

The issue of the day

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 [Mitch O'Farrell, Councilmember, 13th District](#)

Friend --

This week, the Los Angeles City Council voted 13-1 to approve an ordinance that amends Los Angeles Municipal Code 56.11 to limit storage on sidewalks, parkways, and alleys as well as the erection of tents during daylight hours.

The item has been the subject of great debate over the last several months as the City of Los Angeles works to maintain clean and safe neighborhoods, while addressing the needs of our homeless population. The revised ordinance will now provide the City the ability to ensure the public's right of way, while simultaneously offering supportive services needed to guide people toward housing.

My office works daily to end homelessness -- both with outreach and offering supportive services as well as maintaining the sidewalks for cleanliness to the best of our ability. The size of the City's homeless community makes this a monumental task, however my staff and I are committed to improving the quality of life for every resident in the 13th District.

As you might have heard, my office contracts with People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) to provide outreach and supportive services in areas of increased homeless populations such as East Hollywood, Historic Filipinotown, Rampart Village, Echo Park and Silver Lake. Here are some statistics from that partnership:

- PATH has reached out to 397 homeless individuals in the 13th District**
- PATH reports that 10 individuals accepted transitional housing**
- PATH reports that four individuals were moved to permanent supportive housing**

According to these numbers, **one percent of those PATH has met entered into permanent supportive housing**. This statistic underscores the large number of service resistant individuals living on the streets in the 13th District. In addition, we are faced with the following statistics provided by Commander Todd Chamberlain with the Los Angeles Police Department:

- In 2015 there were 2948 reported Part 1 crimes involving homeless individuals. Part 1 crimes include rape, assault, and homicide.**
- 1,237 of those crimes reported involved a victim that was homeless**
- 1,711 of those crimes reported involved a suspect that was homeless**

56.11 was crafted very carefully and with great scrutiny from our City Attorney's office. It will give the Police Department the authority it needs to address the Part 1 crimes that occurred, while also establishing a balance between neighborhood needs and those of our homeless community.

We, as leaders, have to make decisions that are sometimes unpopular. I understand the passions behind this as well, and none of us are immune to human feeling or understanding suffering. I visit the encampments in my district on a regular basis, and I have spoken with many of the homeless individuals living in the 13th District. I hear the suffering they are enduring on the streets. I am also hearing from residents and businesses and they want us to do something about the homeless crisis definitively, and this is a first step in that direction

